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Henry Melchior Muhlenberg

MEMOIR

OF

The Life and Times

OF

HENRY MELCHIOR MUHLENBERG, D. D.,

PATRIARCH OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA.

BY

M. L. STOEVER,

PROFESSOR IN PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE.

Semper honos nomenque tuum laudesque manebunt.

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PREFACE.

THE responsibility of this Memoir belongs to the *Lutheran Board of Publication.* The idea of its preparation originated with those whose wishes the writer felt under obligations to regard. Under other circumstances, he would not have ventured to appear before the public in this capacity. The book makes no pretension. It has been written with the simple design of doing good. The only merit claimed by the compiler is the sincere desire he has cherished to preserve from oblivion one whose memory deserves to be guarded by the Church with affectionate interest, and the effort he has made to gather from every available source any

facts he supposed would throw light upon the subject. He gratefully acknowledges his indebtedness to kind friends who have aided him in collecting the necessary material, and commits the book to an indulgent public, with the hope that it may accomplish the object intended, and be owned by the Great Head of the Church for the advancement of His kingdom and the promotion of His glory.

M. L. S.

Gettysburg, *March* 12th, 1856.

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MEMOIR

OF

HENRY MELCHIOR MUHLENBERG.

CHAPTER I.

"Peace to the just man's memory; let it grow
Greener with years, and blossom through the flight
Of ages; let the mimic canvas show
His calm, benevolent features: let the light
Stream on his deeds of love; that shunned the sight
Of all but Heaven; and on the book of fame
The glorious record of his virtues write,
And hold it up to men, and bid them claim
A palm like his, and catch from him the hallow'd flame."

It is our duty to rescue from oblivion the memory of the wise and good,—to preserve and perpetuate the virtues and labors of those who have been eminent for their piety, and devoted to the interests of the truth. Such a tribute to the memory of the dead is not only due to those who have passed away, but the influence is

salutary upon the living, in teaching lessons of wisdom. Whilst we cherish their worth, we can imitate their example. Being dead, they yet speak and contribute to the advancement of the cause, for which during life they prayed and toiled. The record of their struggles and sacrifices, their labors and successes, is fitted to prolong their usefulness, to animate our zeal, and to furnish additional incentives to increased fidelity and greater diligence in our work of faith and love.

The memory of him who has long been justly regarded as the founder of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, should continue to live in the grateful affections of the Church. His name should be pronounced with veneration and love, — his character revered, — his virtues enshrined in our hearts, and his services transmitted to posterity. His life was useful,— his death was honored, — his influence should be extended to future ages and distant people, to make a still deeper and livelier impression upon mankind.

The arrival of Muhlenberg, in 1742, constitutes a new epoch in the history of our Church in this country. There had been, anterior to this time, numerous Lutheran settlements in different parts of the land, and some of them had been provided with able and faithful ministers; but, as a general matter, our Lutheran population had been sadly neglected. Our members were destitute of the regular means of religious instruction;—comparatively little had been done to supply their spiritual wants. Many were famishing for the lack of knowledge. The children were earnestly crying for bread, and importunately stretching out their hands for help. They naturally looked to their transatlantic brethren, whose hearts were touched with compassion, and whose sympathies became strongly enlisted, in view of the desolation that existed. The imploring cry was not uttered in vain. In answer to the strong appeal, and oft-repeated supplication, relief was sent. For this important and responsible field of labor was procured that eminent

servant of God, whom we delight to recognise as the Patriarch of our Church, and who possessed a combination of qualities so admirably adapted to the missionary work assigned him by Providence in this Western world. From this period in our history, frequent accessions were made to the ranks of the ministry,—men educated at Halle, imbued with the proper spirit, and wholly devoted to their work, upon whose labors the blessing of Heaven signally rested. The character of our Zion soon changed,—its condition gradually improved,—its position was strengthened, and permanence imparted to its operations. This memoir is designed to commemorate the life and services of a man who, under God, contributed no small share to the production of this result, and the indefatigable and self-denying efforts of whose earnest and faithful life illustrated and defended the duties and doctrines of the Church he loved, and for whose advancement he so long labored.

CHAPTER II.

HENRY MELCHIOR MUHLENBERG was born September 6th, 1711, at Einbeck, in Hanover, then a free city of the Empire. He was the son of NICOLAS MELCHIOR AND ANN MARIA KLEINSCHMIDT, originally Saxon, but who, like many of the earlier followers of the great Reformer, having suffered severely during the Thirty Years' War, which, for a time, threatened the extermination of the Protestant religion in Europe, removed to Einbeck. His father was well known in the community, and greatly respected. He was a member of the City Council, and also held a judicial appointment, from which he derived the necessary means for the support of his family. His mother was the daughter of a retired officer, and is represented as a woman of sterling good sense, devoted piety, and untiring energy. His parents early dedicated Henry to God in Christian baptism, and strove to bring him up in the fear of the Lord. Their sacred influence over him was never lost. The

foundations of his character were deeply laid in the dispositions and habits he at this time acquired;—to the pure atmosphere he breathed must be ascribed the strength and vigor of his moral constitution. The religious principles he was taught in his childhood, were never effaced from his mind. In after life he retained a vivid impression of these early scenes. Parental instructions and counsels, together with the fervent prayers with which they were enforced, were not without the Divine blessing. Christian fidelity was accompanied with the promised reward. The seed sown yielded its appropriate fruit. How many striking illustrations do the biographies of good men afford of the power of youthful impressions,—of the deep and lasting influence which early religious instruction exerts upon the mind! The basis of character is usually laid in youth. At this interesting and critical period, you may mould it into any form. By securing it in time, you may render it productive of the highest good. You may imprint upon the child your own soul;—you may give

it a direction, which no subsequent efforts can change. There are no inveterate habits to destroy,—no strong prejudices to eradicate,—no perplexing cares to harass. The youthful mind, unsuspicious and unbiassed, drinks in instruction, and, under the precious influences of the Holy Spirit, is made savingly acquainted with the truth. If we go forth in our Master's strength, relying upon the promised aid, and looking for the Divine blessing, we shall not be disappointed. Even if our efforts should not immediately be crowned with success, there is no reason for discouragement. Although the seed may seem to have died, yet we may rest assured, if we have been faithful, it will spring up, and, in God's own good time, bring forth fruit unto eternal life,—for the word of the Lord hath spoken it: "Train up a child in the way in which he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

At an early period, young Henry was sent to school, his parents being desirous of giving him a regular and liberal education. He at

first attended the instructions of the Primary Schools in his native place, and devoted his time principally to acquiring an acquaintance with his vernacular tongue. At the age of seven, he commenced the study of the Latin language. Gifted with natural abilities, and placed under the most favorable influences, his progress was very rapid; his mental faculties expanded, and he laid the foundation of that general knowledge which belonged to his future character. He was also instructed in the doctrines and duties of the Christian religion, and, at the termination of his twelfth year, was received into connection with the Church, by the rite of confirmation.

The studies of the lad were, however, at this important period of his life, suddenly arrested in consequence of the death of his father, from whose daily exertions the family derived their sustenance. He was accordingly taken from school, and, as he himself remarks, "was for some time kept constantly at hard labor." Although there was little opportunity afforded

him for study, in his efforts to assist in the maintenance of his mother's family, yet his love of knowledge could not be repressed. His own exemplary deportment won for him many friends, who encouraged him in his desires, and aided him in his exertions. His mother, too, was exceedingly anxious that the original plan in reference to the education of her son should be carried out; and, to secure this object, remitted no attention, spared no effort. Although he was compelled to struggle with adversity, and encounter many difficulties, yet in this severe but useful school were formed those distinguished traits of character which so prominently marked his subsequent career, and so admirably qualified him for the arduous position he was afterwards called to occupy in this Western land. His early life were years of privation and toil; yet, without this discipline, he would probably never have acquired those habits of self-reliance, heroic fortitude, and stern determination of purpose, which contributed so much to his future usefulness. That

covenant-keeping God, to whom he had been dedicated in infancy, was exercising over him a watchful care, by preparing him, by a course of discipline, more effectually, for the work which had been appointed him. The afflictions of this life do improve the character and prepare it for increased influence. Men are often trained by a series of Providential events, so as to be made more efficient in that sphere of action for which they are intended. "God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, neither are his ways as our ways." How constantly can the Christian trace the finger of God and recognise his guardian care and superintending guidance in all the occurrences of life. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." He is often led by a path of which he knew not at the time. The dispensations of Providence may sometimes seem to him mysterious,—altogether inexplicable to human reason; yet, he knows, if he loves God, all things will work for his good. One of the most comforting doctrines of Divine revelation is, that we are under the

administration of an infinitely perfect Being, whose ways are directed by unerring wisdom, combined with boundless goodness. Thus the believer gains strength for the future, and girds up his loins for the work.

From his twelfth until his twenty-first year, young Muhlenberg toiled incessantly for a livelihood; yet, during the intervals of repose, his mind was entirely occupied. He eagerly embraced every opportunity afforded him for mental improvement. His leisure moments were faithfully devoted to study, and to acquiring skill in playing upon the organ. On reaching the age of manhood, he regularly resumed his literary pursuits as a private student of the classics, under the direction of one of the Pastors at Einbeck. At the expiration of the year, he succeeded in securing the situation of tutor in the school of Rector Raphelius, at Zellerfeld. Here he gave instruction during four hours of each day; one of the conditions of the engagement being, that the principal part of the time should be at his own disposal,

for the culture of his mind. He was pleased with his situation, and became most deeply interested in his pupils. He was glad of an opportunity to review his early studies, and derived from the exercise great benefit. In his journal, he remarks, "he was able again to learn the pleasant catechism, and to improve himself in writing, arithmetic, and to play upon the organ." With the assistance of Raphelius and his associates, he made considerable progress in his private studies, during the hours he was not officially employed, laying an excellent foundation in the Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and French, and exercising himself in vocal and instrumental music.

In the spring of 1735, at the age of twenty-four, he entered the University of Göttingen, in accordance with the advice of his friend Raphelius, who manifested the deepest interest in his welfare. The means of his support, for the first year, were drawn from a fund contributed by his native city, in connection with the little his widowed mother could gather

together for the purpose. "In this way," he says, "did God, from pure compassion, make provision for my temporal wants." By the aid of generous friends he was enabled still to continue the prosecution of his studies, and to prepare himself more fully for the duties of active life. He continued at the university three years, and during that period he surmounted the obstacles that lay in his path, and attracted the favorable notice of the authorities in the institution. He enjoyed the instructions of Professor Hollman in Philosophy, those of Professor Wœner in Hebrew and Mathematics, of Professor Gesner in the department of Greek, and of Dr. Oporin in Theology. Here he acquired those habits of accurate study, useful discrimination, and systematic effort—of that ripe scholarship and extensive erudition for which he was distinguished in after-life, and which awakened so much admiration. The pious teachings and excellent counsels of Dr. Oporin, who had kindly taken him into his family, and employed him as an

amanuensis, exerted a most salutary influence upon his heart. He was much exercised on the subject of religion, and at this time obtained a deeper insight into his own character by nature, and a clearer apprehension of the plan of salvation. "By the lectures of Dr. Oporin," he remarks, "on the total corruption of our nature, I was much moved, and so convinced of my sinfulness, that I loathed myself on account of my folly. I was convinced by the Word of God, that my understanding had been dark until this period in spiritual things; that my will was disinclined to that new life which proceeds from God; that my memory had been employed only in collecting carnal things, my imagination in discovering sinful objects for the gratification of my perverted affections, and my members by habitual use had become weapons of unrighteousness. But as I learned to recognise sin as sin, there followed sorrow, repentance, and hatred of it—shame and humiliation on account of it—hunger and thirst for the righteousness of Jesus

Christ. In this state of mind I was directed to the crucified Jesus, who had been wounded for my transgressions and bruised for my iniquities. The wounds of Christ healed my wounds, the merits of His death gave me life; my thirst was quenched by Him, the living spring." How interesting is this description of his recovery from sin, and the surrender of his heart to God! How much his experience corresponds with that of all genuine Christians! God's children all have the same image, the same superscription, the stamp which characterizes the whole family. "Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image!"

From this period, Mr. Muhlenberg became a most decided and active Christian. He resigned himself entirely to God's will, and burned with an ardent desire to do good. He formed the purpose of employing his life for the salvation of souls, and of labouring for the Redeemer's glory. His leisure hours he now devoted to efforts for the amelioration of those

around him in indigent circumstances — to labours designed for the spiritual improvement of the most neglected portion of the community. In connection with two other pious students, he regularly gave instruction in the elementary branches of knowledge, and the principles of the Christian religion. This laudable effort at first excited, in some quarters, the most determined opposition, and rendered him the victim of persecution; yet before he left the institution the excitement had entirely subsided; he enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing the school established upon a permanent basis, and placed under the protecting care of the Theological Faculty; its influence was extended, and its facilities for doing good greatly increased. It had gathered around it powerful friends, and its youthful founder was favored with the grateful acknowledgments of those who presided over the interests of the university, for his successful efforts. Of the value of the school, he himself says: "It was of service in withdrawing many beggar children from

the streets, and making them acquainted with the doctrines of the Gospel. In addition to which, also, young students had an opportunity of training themselves in catechisation."

Two years after his introduction to the university, he was received as a regular member of the Theological Seminary, with the privilege of preaching and imparting catechetical instruction. Soon after, he was chosen as private chaplain to Count Reuss XI., whose affection he in a high degree enjoyed; he was also presented to the favorable notice of Baron Von Münchausen, by whom he was generously furnished with means for the continued prosecution of his studies.

On his graduation at Göttingen, through the kind influence of Counts Reuss XXIV. and Erdman Henckel, he was permitted to repair to Halle, for the purpose of devoting some time to Biblical and pastoral studies, and also of giving instruction in the celebrated Orphan House. The position he here occupied was well adapted to fit him for the missionary life

he subsequently pursued. In the discharge of all the duties incumbent upon him, he was found faithful. His great aim seemed to be the approbation of his own heart and the approval of his God. The consciousness of his own weakness, as well as his dependence upon a higher than a human power for success, is at all times apparent. The strongest, he knew, were utterly impotent for any good work, but the weakest were mighty, if they looked unto God, and that His blessing gave the increase. Often was he at the mercy-seat, seeking the Divine aid and imploring the grace which he required to help in time of need. The goodness of God he recognised in all the blessings, temporal and spiritual, which he possessed. He felt that this was the unfailing source whence all his favors sprang, the only true foundation of all his comforts, happiness, and hopes. "Ceaseless praises," he says, "be ascribed to God for the numberless spiritual and temporal gifts I enjoy — the warm parental love and care with which I am favored." During his

residence at Halle, he lived on the most intimate terms with Francke, Cellarius, and Fabricius, who were then among the most distinguished luminaries of the Church. They were his kind friends and affectionate counsellors. Principally by their advice was he persuaded to engage in the work assigned him in this country. Their friendship animated his heart, encouraged him in his missionary labors, and cheered his pathway through life.

The subject of our narrative had been scarcely a year at Halle, when he was invited to return to Göttingen and take charge of the charity school he was instrumental in founding, the operations of which had become greatly enlarged, and required additional force in the instruction. His friends at Halle were, however, unwilling to give their consent, as it was their intention to send him as a missionary to India, to establish a new mission at Bengal. About the same time he also received a call to Great-Hennersdorf, in Lusatia, as pastor and superintendent of the Orphan House. This

appointment he proposed at once to decline, as he regarded himself as designed for the missionary field in Bengal; but Dr. Francke advised him to accept it temporarily, as their arrangements for sending him to India were not yet concluded, and there were some obstacles yet to be removed. He therefore accepted the call tendered him in Lusatia, and immediately made his arrangements for entering upon his duties. He first, however, visited Leipsic, for the purpose of passing through the necessary ordeal preparatory to his admission to the sacred ministry. Having satisfactorily sustained the examination, conducted by Drs. Deyling and Borner, in Greek, Hebrew, Repentance, Conversion, Justification by Faith, and other articles of Christian doctrine, together with the history of the Symbolical books, he was permanently invested with the sacred office. In watching over the interests of the institution at Halle, and performing some pastoral labor, he continued for three years,

faithfully devoted to his duties, and daily gaining knowledge and experience.

In the summer of 1741, whilst he was engaged in these labors, an application from congregations in Pennsylvania reached Halle for a minister of the gospel to supply the great spiritual destitution that prevailed. The attention of the authorities was immediately directed to Mr. Muhlenberg as a most suitable person for this extensive and uncultivated field. When he received the unexpected proposition, he replied with his characteristic devotion to the claims of his Divine Master, "that it was a matter of indifference to him, if it were God's will, as a servant was necessarily dependent upon the wishes of his Lord." After a serious and prayerful examination of the subject, and consultation with friends whose judgment he valued, he concluded that it was his duty to accept the call. With unshaken confidence in God, he is willing to forsake his native land, to relinquish the comforts of home and the society of friends, as well as the prospects of future dis-

tinction and honor to which a mind so highly gifted might naturally have aspired, and to settle, for the advancement of Christ's kingdom, in this then comparatively wild and inhospitable region.

CHAPTER III.

But we must for a moment interrupt the thread of our narrative, for the purpose of giving the reader some account of the condition of the Church in Pennsylvania preceding Muhlenberg's arrival. Its first settlement in the State was made soon after the grant of the province to William Penn, in 1680; and the tide of immigration increased with each succeeding year. Immense multitudes of persecuted and oppressed Germans flocked to this promised land in search of a home, as soon as the principles of the new government became known, and it was understood that liberty of conscience and protection in the exercise of religious opinions would be granted to those who acknow-

ledged one God and lived peaceably in the community; and that exemption from compulsory attendance on the services of the sanctuary, or from the maintenance of any regular ministry, would be guaranteed to every citizen. Some of the earlier emigrants brought with them pious schoolmasters, who assembled with them on the Lord's day, and read the Scriptures, together with "Arndt's True Christianity," and other devotional books. Occasionally also a clergyman was to be found to preach to them the Word of Life, and to give them the necessary religious instruction; but as a general rule, their spiritual wants were disregarded,— their condition was most deplorable. The flock was divided and scattered. Those often who assumed the garb of the shepherd were men without knowledge, and of immoral character, self-constituted pastors, or such as had been suspended from the ministry at home, and engaged in the work from mercenary motives. The influence of this state of things was most disastrous. Deprived of the advantages

of a regular ministry, many of our members became cold and indifferent in the service of God, whilst their children grew up uneducated and hardened in sin. English instructors found no access to the hearts of their German brethren, who clung with great tenacity to their vernacular language, manners and customs, and who, for this reason, frequently, in establishing colonies, separated themselves some distance from the English population. In some sections, however, of these settlements, those who were faithful to their obligations, formed themselves into congregations, and were occasionally supplied with the ordinances of religion by the ministers of the Swedish Lutheran Church, whose colony had settled on the banks of the Delaware as early as 1656. This colony was in a flourishing condition. It had been furnished by the mother country with pastors, and with funds for the erection of houses of worship. When our members applied to the *Swedish Ministerium* for help, the application was always received with favor; those of the brethren who

were familiar with the German language, gladly rendered their services, and ministered to our people in holy things. We find Fabricius, the blind pastor of the Church at Wicaco, from 1688 until 1691, and Dylander, from 1737 until 1741, occasionally officiating for their German brethren of the same faith in Philadelphia. Comparatively few, however, of the Swedes could preach in the German language; besides, the field was so extensive, that our members became discouraged, and almost began to despair. They feared that unless some relief was obtained from the Fatherland, their destitution would continue, their interest in religion be lost, and their Church, in the course of time, become entirely extinct. They most earnestly desired the watchful care of a faithful shepherd, who would gather them together into the fold, whence many had wandered, and direct their devotions in the manner to which they had been accustomed from childhood.

As early as the year 1732, a correspondence was entered into by the German Lutherans in

Philadelphia with Dr. Ziegenhagen, the Court preacher in London, in reference to the condition of our Church, and imploring his aid in an effort to obtain funds, and to secure a pastor. Petitions were likewise forwarded to the Theological Faculties of Halle and Tübigen, appealing to their sympathies and invoking their interest. Some idea of the destitution that existed may be learned from the following communication written about this time, by Mr. Weissiger, of Philadelphia: "Living in a land," says he, "in which religious opinions are almost countless, and being deprived of that food for our souls which we need, and being unable to find ways and means in our own community to supply our wants, we pray God to show us through our friends abroad what may be done for us. The great body of our young people, bewildered by the multitude of opinions, and an absolute want of schools and religious instruction, will go astray and be led into paths of error. The Lord, the searcher of hearts and the trier of the reins, alone knows

how greatly we stand in need of the assistance of our fellow Christians, and that in asking our friends to lift collections for us, we have nothing else in view but the honor of God and the spiritual welfare and eternal salvation of our fellow men. We do not ask for such contributions as are necessary to build stately edifices and temples. No! We shall be fully satisfied if we can obtain sufficient aid to erect places of worship in different parts of our country, where we may meet for prayer and praise, and for the religious instruction of the young. We trust that a merciful God will not forsake us, but will excite the minds of our Christian brethren to assist us in our great spiritual distress; and that your reverence will grant us that aid which we so much need."

Appeals for assistance were frequently renewed, and numerous letters, on the subject of pastoral supplies, interchanged. The spiritual desolation of Zion in this Western hemisphere did move the hearts of our European brethren, as we have seen, and awaken the deepest sym-

pathy,—the most lively interest. Something for their relief would, no doubt, have been done much sooner, but no one, with the proper qualifications, could be found, willing to respond to the earnest solicitation, and accept the important trust. The position, too, demanded a union of qualities rarely found in one individual. Difficulties in the new field were to be adjusted, — dissensions healed, — incompetent men, who had gathered together congregations, were to be removed from office,—influence was to be exerted, and a general supervision exercised over all the interests of the Church. Although the immediate services of a minister could not be procured, a large supply of the sacred Scriptures, hymn books, and devotional manuals, were forwarded to the destitute colonists.

We next find the congregation at Providence uniting with the Lutherans of Philadelphia and New Hanover in an effort to obtain regularly-ordained ministers from Europe, and sending three deputies to England expressly for this

purpose. Disappointed again and again in their wishes, they still felt as if they could not abandon a project most dear to their hearts. Warmly attached to the Church in which they had been reared, and believing that something must be done to rescue it from the ruin that impended, they determined that they would persevere in their attempts until success crowned their efforts. Their wishes were at length gratified,—their prayers answered, and a messenger of the Cross, eminently qualified for the task, was secured.

CHAPTER IV.

Mr. MUHLENBERG having felt that it was his duty to undertake the missionary work assigned him, soon began to make preparations for leaving his native land. Before his departure, he visited valued friends and the familiar scenes of his boyhood, gratefully recalling to mind the reminiscences of the past, and confidently anticipating his happy re-union with those whom

he loved on the earth, in another and better world. These final interviews with his friends were not only pleasant to him, but they were profitable to his soul. They were long and fondly cherished in his memory, and frequently referred to in after life. In allusion to one of them, he remarks: "We not only recounted the wonderful and blessed dealings of Providence, but we strengthened one another, and refreshed ourselves with prayer, thanksgiving, and praise." It was a severe trial for him to part from his aged mother; yet he felt that he was in the path of duty, and that God's grace would be sufficient for him. He never distrusted the Divine promise; he was not permitted to despair. "The Lord," he says, "had sympathy with my sufferings, and directed everything in such a way that I was compelled silently to adore and to ascribe all to His special providence and care."

He commenced his journey in the spring of 1742, passing through Holland on his way to England. In London, he met with a cordial

reception from Rev. Dr. Ziegenhagen, Chaplain to King George II., who greatly encouraged him in his mission, and materially aided him in his object. With this excellent and faithful man he remained nine weeks, diligently improving his time in seeking additional instruction and counsel with regard to his future duties. How much he enjoyed the season may be inferred from the following memorandum in his journal: "The time was entirely too short for me, and the questions too numerous, upon which I would gladly have conversed with him; — so numerous were they indeed, that I was often in doubt which should be taken first. The consideration of these subjects caused me greater joy, and was far more pleasing to me than the possession of jewels or many pieces of gold."

The necessary arrangements having been completed, the subject of our memoir embarked for America, in a packet-boat destined for Georgia, inasmuch as it was thought expedient by the brethren in London for him to visit the

colony at Ebenezer, before entering upon his duties in Pennsylvania. The voyage, which was long and irksome, was rendered still more unpleasant by the rude and wicked company, and the sufferings to which they were exposed by the want of water and fresh provisions. During the whole time, Mr. Muhlenberg conducted himself in a manner becoming a minister of the gospel; he sought every opportunity in his power to benefit his fellow-passengers, and constantly endeavored to imitate the example of Him who went about doing good. We find him deeply interested in a family of Salzburgers, refugees from religious persecution, who were on their way to Ebenezer, to join their brethren who had already preceded them. He explained to them from day to day the sacred volume, — united with them at the throne of Grace in prayer and praise, and instructed their children in the Catechism. At one time we observe him conversing with a poor Spaniard, a Roman Catholic, whom he endeavored to bring under the influence of

Divine truth; — at another, laboring to revive early religious instructions, and to awaken convictions in the heart of one who, in his youth, had been piously educated by his father in Scotland, but who had strayed far from virtue, and was living with "no hope, and without God in the world." The humblest of the seamen he did not neglect; he labored to reclaim all,—to instruct them in the plan of salvation, and to bring them to a saving acquaintance with Him who is "the way and the truth and the life." In one place in his Journal, he remarks: "I conversed to-day with some of the crew, and tried to explain to them how sad their condition was, so long as they were estranged from God by wicked works;" — and in another place he says: "I urged upon the English passengers the necessity of a radical change in their life by the exercise of faith in the crucified Redeemer. They all listened," he tells us, "with attention, admitted the truth of my statements, and thanked me for my instructions. But how difficult it is to produce

upon the minds of men a permanent impression of the doctrine of regeneration. The many prejudices which darken the understanding—the strong influence of sinful habits, together with riches, worldly prospects, and the cares of life, are powerful hinderances in the way." These passages are introduced for the purpose of showing that he continually realized the responsibility of his office as an ambassador of Christ, and regarded it as his imperative duty on all occasions to do something for the cause of the Redeemer. They also breathe a most evangelical spirit, and serve to illustrate the piety of this eminent servant of God. At the earnest request of the Captain, he frequently performed Divine service on board, preaching from such texts as these: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink;" "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;" and always endeavoring to present practical and useful truths for the consideration of his hearers. Although he at this time used the English language imperfectly, he did not

on this account refuse to preach. These efforts to do good were not in vain. They were accompanied with their appropriate reward. "My hearers," he writes, "were exceedingly attentive, and not a little affected. In everything there was quiet, and some were even heard repeating what had been said, which is a rare occurrence among such people." During the voyage, he also read, in compliance with the wishes of the Captain, when he attended to public worship, the Episcopal service in the Common Prayer Book, remarking, in connexion: "One dare not think that the prayers contain anything which is inconsistent with the doctrines of the Lutheran Church; for they contain valuable truths taken from the Bible. Besides, they make use of the same prayers and services in the German Lutheran Church at London, as I very well know, for I heard them read, and was edified by them. I therefore read the prayers on board the vessel, and the people were pleased." This may be regarded as an evidence of his Christian feeling

and catholic liberality,—disposed, on subjects of minor importance, to make concessions, and insisting only upon those principles which are fundamental. He was often much annoyed by the profanity and foolish jesting he witnessed during the voyage on board the vessel; yet he reproved, rebuked, and was patient with all. His faith in God was always strong,—and more than once did he suppose that direct answer was given to his prayers. On one occasion he says: "Weary of life in such a lazaretto, I prayed to my Father in secret, and desired, if it were in accordance with his will, he would speedily send us a favorable wind, to confirm my faith in a particular Providence, and put to shame those who were unbelieving. The next day, when I awoke, the ship was in rapid motion, as God, in his mercy, had sent a fine breeze, which incited me to praise His name and trust His goodness."

CHAPTER V.

Mr. MUHLENBERG reached Charleston, S. C., September 22d, and, according to his instructions, immediately proceeded to Ebenezer, for the purpose of conferring on the affairs of the Church with Rev. Messrs. Bolzius and Gronau, who, with a colony of Lutherans, had established themselves in Georgia, in the year 1734. These emigrants came from Salzburg, formerly a district of Bavaria, but at present a detached province of Austria. Oppressed by Romish intolerance at home, they sought an asylum in this country. Having left their native land for conscience' sake, they were willing to suffer imprisonment, exile, and even death, rather than surrender their religious principles, which they valued so highly, and upon which they based all their hopes of future happiness. Great was the joy of the Salzburgers to behold the face of this herald of the cross, who had come hither to this Western world, that he might gather together the scattered Germans

in the Northern provinces, and minister to their spiritual necessities, as they were endeavoring to do in the south. These brethren took sweet counsel together. They consecrated themselves anew to the service of the Redeemer, with the resolution to be more faithful in the work to which they had devoted themselves. This covenant they ratified by partaking together of the emblems of their Saviour's love in the Holy Eucharist. Mr. Muhlenberg departed for the scene of his future labors, greatly refreshed in spirit and strengthened for the work. Pastor Gronau refers to the occasion of the visit in the following language: "Never before have we spent so blessed and so happy a season at Ebenezer. For the Lord had never before permitted us to embrace a dear friend from our native country, in whom we found a real brother in Christ. My desire and hope is, that our connexion may be still more intimate, and that God will grant his blessing to the labors of our brother, so that through the preaching of the gospel, a church may be built up in Pennsyl-

vania, with which we can join hand and heart."

Mr. Muhlenberg's journey was continued, and after a most disagreeable and dangerous voyage in a small and insecure sloop, with no accommodations for passengers, he reached Philadelphia, November 28th, 1742. His arrival was a source of inexpressible joy to the Germans, who had been so long and so anxiously expecting him. He tells us, "that he met with a blessed reception; and although they had been many years without a regular minister, and were beset by difficulties on all sides, he found that old and young approached him with a great desire to be instructed in the word of God; that parents, with their children, and other aged persons, came to be prepared for the celebration of the Lord's Supper; and that the attention and interest with which they received religious instruction, caused him the most heartfelt gratification, and very much relieved his heavy burden."

The Church was, however, in a wretched

condition. According to his own expression, it was not *plantata*, but *plantanda*. There were at the time three distinct organised congregations, that had originally united in extending the call. One was in Philadelphia, quite small, the members of which were in indigent circumstances, and being unable to erect a place for public worship, had joined with their Reformed brethren in renting and fitting up a carpenter's shop, or, according to others, a barn, for Divine service. The spring preceding, the congregation, under the impression that an immediate supply from Halle could not be obtained, had given an invitation to Count Zinzindorf, under the assumed name of Thürstein, with whom and his partisans Muhlenberg, on his arrival, had an unpleasant and protracted struggle. At Providence (the Trappe), he found about fifty families, but there was no church edifice. The congregation had been for some time without a pastor, as they were determined to have none other than a regularly commissioned minister. They were

served several times during the year by a clergyman of the Swedish Lutheran Church. Muhlenberg says: "He preached at first here in a barn, but the people were attentive and hungered after the word." At New Hanover (the Swamp), the congregation consisted of one hundred and twenty families, who worshipped in a log building yet unfinished. They were, however, in a most lamentable state. Some of the members rejoiced that Mr. Muhlenberg had come; others were not entirely satisfied, as they were then supplied with a self-constituted pastor, who had stolen into the fold, whom they thought it would be wrong to dismiss. "He could still preach," said they, "very well, even if he were not ordained, and did sometimes get under the influence of intoxicating drinks; they had been deceived before,—they might be deceived again."

Objections being at length withdrawn, Mr. Muhlenberg assumed the care of the united charge that had given the original invitation, and soon entered upon his duties, preaching his

first sermon from the words: "Now, then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." The first ten years of his ministry in this country he resided in Philadelphia. His congregations were remote from one another, and he necessarily served them under disadvantageous circumstances, until additional aid from Europe was secured; yet all the energies of his body and the faculties of his mind were devoted to the great object that had brought him hither, building up the Church and bringing souls to Christ. His motto was, "*Memento hodie mori;*" and under the influence of this sentiment, he continually acted. He labored with comprehensive and well-directed views for the benefit of our whole Zion, and not without the most gratifying evidence of the Divine presence. There was much to discourage his heart, perplex his mind, and embarrass his plans; but his spirits never failed him, — his confidence in God remained unshaken. Many of the difficulties

which lay in his path were removed by his judicious measures and patient efforts. His early training and previous discipline he found invaluable for the various exigencies in which he was placed. His duties were numerous and arduous, but they were discharged with conscientious fidelity and unwearied application, and amidst perils and difficulties, trials and exposures, at the present day scarcely credible. In his correspondence with the brethren at Halle, he represents the condition of things as most deplorable. He writes: "Here are thousands, who, by birth, education, and confirmation, ought to belong to our church, but they are scattered to the four winds of heaven. The spiritual state of our people is so wretched as to cause us to shed tears in abundance. The young people have grown up without any knowledge of religion, and are fast running into heathenism." The ignorance among the youth seemed to distress him very much. Very few of them were able to read, and suitable teachers could not be procured. He himself found it

necessary to give instruction in the most elementary branches. Referring to this subject in a letter written in 1743, he thus speaks: "Necessity has compelled me to become a teacher of children. One week I keep school in Philadelphia, the next in Providence, and the third in New Hanover; and I think God's grace is visiting us. If affairs had remained a few years longer in the same state in which I found them, our poor Lutherans would have suffered irretrievably. There are found here almost innumerable systems, opinions, and temptations. Atheists, Deists, and Materialists meet you on every side. It seems to me there is not a sect in the world which is not fostered here. You meet with persons from nearly every nation in the world. What would not be tolerated in Europe, finds full license here. God and his word are openly blasphemed — his ordinances neglected, and his worship despised."

Notwithstanding his multiplied and arduous labors, Mr. Muhlenberg consented to take charge of the congregation at Germantown,

which had been organized in 1737, and for whom Rev. John Dylander, a Swedish Lutheran minister, had, from time to time, been preaching and performing pastoral labor. Here he officiated on a week-day; the rest of the week he usually spent in Philadelphia. The services of the sanctuary were, however, well attended, and the favor of Heaven rested upon his efforts. In a communication found in the *Hallische Nachrichten* of 1743, he says: "The Lord adds some blessing to my labors at Germantown. The word does not return void. Those who have been received into the church continue, through the grace of God, to grow steadily and to bear fruit. I recently baptized a mother and five adult children. They were so deeply affected that I might almost have baptized them with their tears. The Gospel also has, among others, won an old grey-headed man, and brought him to a saving acquaintance with the Saviour."

In addition to his regular charge, Mr. Muhlenberg visited those points in our country in which he ascertained that there were mem-

bers of the Lutheran Church unsupplied with spiritual ministrations. An interesting account of such a visit, made in 1745, to Chester, is preserved. He preached to these Germans, and formed them into a regular congregation. As he was unable to serve them as pastor, he exhorted them to assemble on the Lord's day for singing, prayer, and the reading of a sermon, at the same time promising to let them have a volume of suitable discourses. He says: "They stood around me and wept like children, or rather, they approached me like a flock of sheep, that had lost their shepherd and had found him again."

Preparations for erecting several churches were made soon after Mr. Muhlenberg's arrival. In the spring of 1743, the corner-stone of St. Michael's Church, in Philadelphia, was laid, and the following autumn the first services were held in it. At Providence a house for religious worship was built the same year. Funds received from Germany were devoted to this object, and these resources failing, he hesitated

not, in reliance on the divine aid, to contract debt for the completion of the edifice.

In the winter of 1745, the heart of Mr. Muhlenberg was cheered by the arrival of additional laborers for this vineyard of the Lord. In answer to his earnest and repeated supplications for aid, a reinforcement to the field was sent from Halle by those who deeply sympathized with him in his missionary labors, and who from the beginning had desired to procure for him an associate in his important work. The company consisted of Rev. Peter Brunnholtz and Messrs. J. N. Kurtz and J. H. Schaum. The latter two came in the capacity of *catechists*, with the expectation of devoting their attention, for some time, to the business of teaching, and of thus removing an impediment to the success of the Gospel. They were also to assist in preaching and rendering other ministerial service, under the direction of the ordained pastors. It was a part of our earlier system to connect the teacher, who was generally well educated, and selected for his piety, with the minister in

all our congregations. Wherever there was a church, it was the practice of our fathers to plant a school. This was under the control of the church, and proved a valuable auxiliary in advancing its interests. It was considered essential to educate the children of the church in the principles of the Christian religion, as well as to furnish them with secular instruction. Happy had it been for our communion if this practice had never been abandoned — if this feature, peculiar to our ecclesiastical arrangements, had never been surrendered!

Mr. Brunnholtz now became co-pastor of the four associated congregations, and, in consequence of his delicate constitution and feeble health, took up his abode in the city, the churches in Philadelphia and Germantown being more immediately committed to his care; whilst Dr. Muhlenberg magnanimously assumed the more laborious duties connected at that time with a residence in the country. Mr. Kurtz took charge of the school in New Hanover, and Mr. Schaum of the one in Philadelphia. These pioneers in our church were all

indefatigable in their labors. Numerous and arduous were the difficulties with which they had to contend — formidable the obstacles they had to surmount, in planting the church in this western land. The country was fertile, but unimproved; the houses were few and far between; there were no turnpike-roads, no bridges, no conveniences for travellers; the roads led through forests, which abounded with wild beasts, and the still more hostile aborigines of the country, who often lay in wait with the tomahawk and scalping-knife to massacre the European. The services of the sanctuary, in some sections, were often conducted even at the imminent risk of life itself. During the hours of public worship, the officers stood at the church doors, armed with defensive weapons, to prevent surprise, and, if necessary, to protect minister and people from an unexpected and ruthless attack. It is stated, in a letter written by one of the brethren about this time, that on one day the bodies of not less than seven members of his congregation were brought to the church, having been murdered by the

Indians the evening before. Being anxious to improve the solemn occasion to the spiritual welfare of his hearers, he postponed the interment until the succeeding day, and suffered the mangled bodies to remain in the church until the congregation convened. Our own population, too, was very unsettled; ministerial support was inadequate, and frequently, in the discharge of duty, the most violent opposition had to be encountered. God, in his goodness, raised up for the times the very men that were needed! Their Christian heroism—their energetic devotion to the principles they professed—their laborious, faithful, self-denying efforts for the salvation of souls, and the promotion of God's glory, made a deep impression upon the community, and secured for them the general confidence and warm regard of their cotemporaries. Of them it may be truly said, "In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of their own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in

weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." They preached in season and out of season, in churches, in private dwellings, in barns, and in the open air, wholly absorbed in the work to which they believed they had been called, and earnestly laboring for the elevation of their countrymen and the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom. How beautiful is the narrative of their hopes and their fears, their toils and successes! The little one became a thousand — the lights kindled by their ministrations will never be extinguished!

CHAPTER VI.

But to resume our sketch. Dr. Muhlenberg's residence, from the year 1745 until 1761, was at Providence. To this congregation, and the one at New Hanover, he directed the most of his attention. Yet his labors were very far from being confined to those two places. His duties, in many respects, resembled those of an itinerant bishop, whose diocese embraced a con-

siderable space of territory. Frequently, he undertook distant and irksome journeys, for the purpose of gathering together the scattered flock, preaching to destitute congregations, adjusting church difficulties, restoring peace among the brethren, introducing wholesome discipline for the government of churches, encouraging and stimulating feeble congregations, and performing other kind services, in his desire to repair the waste places of Zion, and promote the cause of genuine piety. "No one," says Dr. Helmuth, "can think of the immense amount of labor he accomplished, and that, too, with the greatest willingness, without being greatly surprised." The care of all the churches seemed to rest upon him. If any serious difficulty anywhere existed, his aid was immediately invoked, his counsel earnestly sought. He had the confidence of our people. His presence at once inspired hope. His opinions were valued, and the influence which he exerted was boundless and unprecedented. He frequently labored in New York, in Lancaster, York, and other points in Pennsylvania, as well as occa-

sionally in the States of New Jersey, Maryland, and Georgia. There was probably not a Lutheran Church, in his day, in this country in which he had not officiated. Sometimes these missionary tours required an absence from home for several months, and subjected him to considerable personal inconvenience, and, at times, exposed him to no little abuse and censure, yet he cheerfully submitted to all. No murmur escaped his lips. He was willing to make any sacrifice, endure any suffering, incur any reproach, and render any service, however toilsome and painful, that he might advance his mission and bring souls to Christ. He never shrank from any labor; he never grew weary in well-doing. In visiting the cities of New York and Rhinebeck, although at the time in feeble health, he travelled on horseback a distance of more than two hundred miles, through dense forests and deep morasses, and consented to be absent from his family and his own pastoral charge for many weeks, because the interests of our church in that region demanded

his presence. Two trips were made by him to the State of New York in two consecutive years for the benefit of our people. His services were appreciated; his labors proved most beneficial. Our members became very much attached to him during his temporary sojourn among them. With unaffected reluctance they consented to his departure; with tears they besought him to transfer his abode and locate permanently in their midst. The question he referred to the fathers at Halle; but as his removal from Pennsylvania did not meet with their approval, he at once declined the proposition.

In the spring of 1748, an addition was made to our laborers in the person of Rev. J. F. Handschuh, also commissioned by Dr. Ziegenhagen, of London, and Professor Francke, of Halle. He was welcomed by Dr. Muhlenberg with the words, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." He, for a time, took charge of the vacant congregation in Lancaster, but subsequently he became associated with the brethren in Philadelphia.

In obedience to the recommendation of the Theological Faculty at Halle, the first Lutheran

Synod in America was organized August 14th, 1748, for the purpose of examining and ordaining ministerial candidates already engaged in the service of the Church — of advancing the general interests of the Lutheran congregations in the American colonies — of devising ways and means for supplying the Germans dispersed through the land with the preached word, and of imparting greater efficiency to the labors of the ministry. At this synodical convention, there were in attendance six clergymen; viz., Messrs. Muhlenberg, Brunnholtz, Handschuh, Hartwig, Provost Sandin, and Magister Næsman. The last two were of the Swedish Lutheran Church. They, however, participated in the discussions and business of the convention. Rev. Dr. Muhlenberg was chosen as the president of the synod. At this meeting there were also lay-delegates present, who were received as members and took part in the proceedings. In the organization of the synod, a very liberal form of Church government was adopted, similar in many of its features to the Congregational system. Its prominent characteristics were the parity of the ministry, the

co-operation of the laity in the administration of the church, and the voluntary convention of synod. At this meeting of the synod, Mr. Kurtz was permanently invested with the sacred office. After his examination, his call was signed by the elders and deacons of the congregation which he had been serving. Mr. Schaum was not ordained till the following year, in consequence of his remoteness at the time from Philadelphia, and the difficulty, at that period, of reaching it. There were, it is said, at this period, only eleven ordained clergymen to minister to our forty organized congregations, whilst the Lutheran population was estimated at sixty thousand, dispersed over a large extent of ground. The number of ministers did not increase with the growth of the population, from the fact that we were almost entirely dependent upon our European brethren for any additions to the ranks. We had no facilities for educating young men in our own land. Those who desired to prepare for the work, were compelled to go all the way to Germany to receive the necessary instruction. Dr. Muhlenberg from the beginning advocated the

necessity of establishing a literary and theological institution, that the Church might be provided with an educated ministry. Dr. Freylinghausen says, "he often expressed his earnest desire that the vast and increasing multitude of German Lutherans in North America might be better provided for in reference to their religious instruction. He is convinced that the present arrangements are insufficient, and that a seminary ought to be established to train up laborers to publish the doctrines of the Gospel. But the difficulty is that the greater part of our congregations are burdened with debt, and are unable to contribute to such an enterprise." Under the circumstances, however, he really did better than could have been expected. The Church prospered. The efforts of our patriarchs were successful. Their efforts were accompanied with God's blessing. Many manifest seals were given to their ministry.

In 1749, the first edition of Luther's Catechism, published in this country, was issued from the press. It was printed in Philadelphia at the office of Benjamin Franklin. In 1754, the *Kirchen Agende* was prepared by Dr. Muh-

lenberg. This is a brief directory for public worship, and was designed to secure uniformity in the services of the Church. In the preparation of this document, the formula of the German Lutheran Church in London was used as a basis. Accessions to the ministry became from time to time more frequent; almost all were from the institutions at Halle, — men of rare excellence, of fervent, practical piety, who evinced the sincerity of their principles by their blameless life and active benevolence. Rev. F. Shulze and Rev. M. Heintzelman reached our shores in 1751; Rev. J. L. Voigt and Rev. J. A. Krug, in 1764; Rev. C. E. Schultze, in 1765; Rev. J. H. Helmuth and Rev. J. F. Schmidt, in 1769; Rev. J. C. Kunze, in 1770, together with two sons of Dr. Muhlenberg, who had gone abroad to prosecute their preparations for the ministry. Others also came, less known to fame, but equally deserving of our veneration and gratitude.

CHAPTER VII.

In the year 1761, the subject of our Memoir again took up his residence in Philadelphia.

The state of things in the congregation was such as to render his presence necessary. Here he remained until 1776. During this period, his labors were devoted almost exclusively to the congregation in the city,—the church at Providence, however, still claiming him as its pastor, and placing a very high estimate upon his worth and service. But this was the concurrent testimony. His services were considered invaluable; his influence was everywhere most healthful. Says one, who was often at this time brought in contact with him, "We are more than astonished at his patience, his long suffering, his meekness under injuries, his love of his enemies." What a rebuke is this testimony to many who, in these days, minister at the altar! How often do we all, in our intercourse with others, seem to forget the temper and spirit becoming the Christian, so deserving of watchful and constant attention, and thus bring reproach upon a cause we profess to love, and whose interests we desire to promote. "Know ye not," saith the Apostle, "that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

On the death of Mr. Handschuh, in 1764, the

care and labor of the whole congregation in Philadelphia devolved upon Dr. Muhlenberg. The duties were most onerous, and at this time the propriety of a division of the congregation was discussed. The necessity of the measure was obviated by the seasonable arrival of Rev. C. E. Schultze, the following year, from Halle, who was immediately elected second minister of the congregation. For several years these brethren labored most harmoniously together in building up our Church in Philadelphia, and in advancing the interests of Christ's kingdom. In 1766, was laid the corner-stone of Zion's Church, which was dedicated to the Triune God, June 25th, 1769. This was considered, at the time of its erection, the largest and most elegant church in the United States. This same edifice, during our Revolutionary struggle, when Philadelphia was in the possession of the British, was converted into a hospital for the sick, — whilst St. Michael's was used as a garrison church. After the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, Congress repaired in a body to this church, to express their grateful acknowledgments to Almighty God for the victory that had been achieved, and

the triumphant success of the American arms. Something of the spirit of our fathers may be learned from the concluding paragraph contained in the document deposited in the corner-stone of Zion's Church. It is addressed to posterity, and will no doubt be read with interest: "And now, dear children, and children's children, we commend you to God and the word of His grace, who is mighty to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all who are sanctified. We confidently trust that we are not guilty of your blood, if *you* neglect your salvation in the wilderness of this world. Observe diligently and carefully your church regulations, that in virtue of them you may always be provided with pastors and teachers, who take heed to themselves and the flock, over which the Holy Ghost shall have set them as overseers, that they may feed the Church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood; and act towards these your teachers so that they may discharge their duties with joy, and not with grief. Take heed also, through the Grace of God, and the means of his grace, that you may become and abide fruitful branches in Christ, the true Vine,—children of

light,—members of his spiritual body, and living stones of the Heavenly Zion. Suffer no discord or party spirit to arise among you, but quench its first appearance with Christian love and mildness. Act kindly and neighborly towards the members of our sister churches, and do to them as you wish that they should do to you. Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. Let the mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus, and walk as he walked. And if, in following him, you are tempted by trials and sufferings, think it not strange, but rejoice when you suffer with Christ, — so that, in the revelation of his glory, you may have everlasting joy. Now to the God of peace, that brought you from the dead, our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever."

Dr. Muhlenberg continued to labor in Philadelphia for fifteen years, greatly beloved by his congregation, and held in the highest esteem by the whole community, — faithfully doing the

work of his Master, and gathering in many trophies of redeeming grace. During this period, there was only one missionary journey of any length performed by him; that was in the year 1774, when he had in his congregational labors the assistance of Dr. Kunze, and also of his youngest son, who had, a few years before, completed his studies abroad. This mission was undertaken at the request of the Fathers at Halle, with the view of bringing about an amicable adjustment of the unhappy difficulty that existed among brethren at Ebenezer, and of restoring harmony in the Church. The judicious efforts of Dr. Muhlenberg to heal the breach between Messrs. Robenhorst and Triebner were not in vain. He carefully investigated the questions of dispute, and disposed of the case with great prudence. His first step was to have a personal interview with the disaffected parties, and then to request each one to present him with a written statement of his grievances. After the examination of which, he told them that they should bury all their former animosities and contentions, and cordially forgive each other, as there were faults on both sides. "I

had," says he, "advised my brother Triebner how, with few words, he might end the complicated and perplexing strife, if he would say before the meeting, 'I have erred, and ask your cordial forgiveness, — and wherein you have wronged me, that I will forgive with all my heart, and forget.' For, under all the circumstances, I could learn that in many things he had acted unreasonably, not according to grace, but according to our depraved nature. I told him that even a subject of Divine grace carried within his breast the root or seed of evil; and if he watched not over his heart, he could soon be overtaken in a fault; — that we were also commanded to abstain from the very appearance of evil. I also stated that duty as well as love had induced me to undertake the fatiguing journey, that, with the help of God, peace and unity might be restored; but if they were determined to continue in discord, then my visit and experiment had ended, — and that to-morrow, with a sad and heavy heart, I would depart, and report the result."

We have dwelt upon this case, because it not only serves to illustrate the Christian character

and spirit of the Patriarch, but also presents the true mode of reconciling differences, which unfortunately do sometimes arise, even among those who are the professed followers of the meek and lowly Redeemer.

Dr. Muhlenberg remained in Georgia three months, during which time he preached frequently in all the churches of the Salzburgers, and performed an immense amount of labor. He investigated their financial affairs, secured the rights of the congregations to their property, introduced discipline for the better government of the churches, and displayed a degree of tact and Christian fidelity worthy of all praise.

In the year 1776, in consequence of increasing physical infirmities, and the civil commotions that existed, he applied for permission to retire into the country, where he could enjoy repose, and engage in labor more congenial to his feelings, and more favorable to the dilapidated state of his health. He repaired to his former residence at the Trappe, but did not assume the entire care of the congregation. Rev. J. L. Voigt, and subsequently his son, Rev. F. A. Muhlenberg, were associated with him in his labors. His ministerial duties were not, however, suspended,

his life was by no means inactive. He ceased not daily to teach and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. He often officiated on the Sabbath, and whenever an opportunity of doing good presented, he was willing to perform service in the English language. In his day the unhappy controversy in reference to the introduction of the English into the exercises of public worship had not yet arisen. As early as the year 1754, we find him preaching at Providence every other Lord's Day during the summer—in the morning, German, and in the afternoon, English, "because," as he says, "there were more English than German inhabitants." We observe, also, that when he resigned his charge in the country in 1761, his valedictory was pronounced in English as well as German. In noticing his visit to Hackensack in 1752, he says: "In the afternoon, I preached English, because a number of English families resided here, and had no preacher. They offered to unite with the Church, if I would remain and become their pastor. Also, in the account which he gives of the second meeting of the Synod, held in Lancaster, Pa., he says: "I was compelled at night to preach for the English, inasmuch as they were

without a pastor, and earnestly desired the service." He showed a disposition to preach in English when the interests of the people seemed to require it, and an occasion of usefulness offered. This was the correct principle, and would that his successors generally had imitated his example! If his enlightened policy and judicious counsels had subsequently been pursued, how different would have been the result in our Church! If an acquaintance with the English language had been cultivated, and the rising generation furnished with the ministrations and ordinances of God's house, in a language which they could understand, how much more favorable an aspect would the American Lutheran Church at this day present! The unfortunate controversy was not started until about the year 1790, when the proposition was made to introduce English into the services of the sanctuary, for the benefit of those who were not familiar with the German language. The contest was protracted and bitter; the discussions warm and acrimonious; the excitement in many places most intense and fierce. Bad feeling for a long time prevailed. The Germans regarded

the attempt as an innovation upon their rights, and almost everywhere resisted the effort to introduce any change. This tenacious adherence to the exclusive use of the German was most disastrous to the prosperity of our Church. For a long time it retarded our progress, and very nearly occasioned our total ruin. Thousands abandoned their parental communion, and sought a home in other churches, because their children did not understand the German; whilst many who remained, in consequence of their limited acquaintance with the language, lost their interest in religious subjects, and became remiss in their attendance at public worship. Other denominations built on our material, and gathered in a rich harvest. If the same policy had been persevered in, the Lutheran Church in this country must in time have become extinct. The action of those who clung with so much pertinacity to their vernacular tongue was, however, perfectly natural. They were sincere in the course they pursued, but mistaken. We refer to the fact, not for the purpose of condemning them, as we think every allowance ought to be made for their conduct, and we are certain that many of the present generation, under similar circumstances,

would have occupied a similar position; but for the purpose of presenting a truth connected with our early history. This was one of the causes which impeded the progress of our Church, destroyed its efficiency, and circumscribed its influence.

CHAPTER VIII.

When Pennsylvania was the scene of warlike operations during the years 1777–8, the tranquillity and repose of Dr. Muhlenberg were often very much disturbed. He was the bosom friend of his adopted country, and his devotion to the principles of the American Revolution excited against him the most violent opposition of the enemy. In his manuscript Journal he writes: "The name of Muhlenberg is greatly disliked and abused by the British and Hessian officers in Philadelphia, and they threaten prison, tortures, and death, so soon as they can lay hands upon me." He was subjected to annoyances of various kinds. He was extensively known, and his relations to the Revolution well understood. Many took advantage of his position, and all

classes resorted to his house. "His home," says a cotemporary, "was constantly filled with fugitives, acquaintances and strangers, with the poor and the hungry, noble and common beggars. The hungry never went away unsatisfied, nor the suffering uncomforted. He experienced loss, and was often exposed to danger. He sometimes suffered from the passing of the American troops, and frequently the enemy was near and threatened. He was warned and entreated to remove farther into the interior from the scene of hostilities, as threats were daily made upon his life; but he always refused. He was firm, and would not withdraw from the danger. He sought, in humble prayer, protection under the shadow of the Almighty; and his God, in whom he trusted, wonderfully guarded and delivered him from the evil that seemed to impend."

During the last ten years of Dr. Muhlenberg's life, the infirmities of age greatly increased; his physical strength gradually declined, so that he was scarcely able to leave his chamber. In consequence of the swelling of his feet, walking and riding were equally difficult. He also suffered from asthma, and other painful maladies. His constitution began to exhibit evidences of decay,

from the year 1780. The hardships and exposures through which he had passed in his early labors in this country, no doubt, hastened his decline. His mental activity and vigor, however, remained unimpaired. When his voice could no longer be heard in the pulpit, he was still engaged in doing good by correspondence and other means. He spent much of his time in retirement, profitably occupied in concern for the church, in setting his house in order, and calmly awaiting the expected summons. "His last years," says Dr. Helmuth, "were years of prayer. It was his constant employment." He was often at the throne of grace, and the book which he most of all delighted to read was the Bible. From it he received the strength which he required, and that comfort which is never denied to those who reverently pray, "Not my will, but thine, O Lord, be done." His protracted confinement he endured with meekness and Christian submission. His sufferings were borne with patience and fortitude. No murmur or complaint escaped his lips. God was with him in all his trials. His old friend, Pastor Voigt, visited him a few days before his death,

and expressed joy at the apparently improved condition of his health, but the aged servant of God told him that they would scarcely meet again in this world. His mind was, however, calm and comfortable. He had no fear of death, although the hand of the destroyer was uplifted to strike him down. Conscious of his situation, he was happy in the prospect, and approached the dark chamber of death—

"Sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust."

He could look forward with joy to the rewards of the future — to those bright and beautiful mansions prepared for him in the heavens—full of humble confidence and filial faith in his blessed Redeemer. On the Saturday evening preceding his death, indications of his dissolution began to appear. He thought he would die about midnight, and frequently inquired if it were yet twelve o'clock. Precisely at that hour he requested two of his children to lead him from his chair to the bed, for there he wished to die; and whilst they were in the act of complying with his wishes, he repeated those beautiful lines from Paul Gerhard, his favorite hymn: —

"Mach end, O Herr, mach ende,
An aller unsrer Noth,
Stærk unsre Fuess' und Hænde,
Und lasz, bis in den Tod,
Uns allzeit deiner Pflege
Und Treu empfohlen seyn,
So gehen unsre Wege
Gewisz zum Himmel ein."

Once more he breathed! The silver cord was gently loosed, and his spirit rested in the bosom of his God.

"His last thoughts were God's, his last words prayer."

Thus peacefully terminated the active and useful career of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, on Sabbath morning, October 7th, 1787, in the 77th year of his age. On the following Wednesday, they carried his body to the grave. The congregation in Philadelphia earnestly desired his remains to repose in their midst, but his family decided otherwise. Around his tomb hundreds gathered to pay their last tribute of love to departed worth,—to do honor to the memory of one whose virtues and services were indelibly impressed upon their hearts. There were not less than twenty clergymen in attendance. All his brethren, who could come together on so short a notice, were present. Many persons were present from Philadelphia and other

places. The people grieved that they should no longer see his face, and listen to his paternal counsels. Every heart was struck with grief. All seemed to feel that a good man had fallen in Israel—and that a void had been created, which could not be easily filled. He was the friend and father of all, and all regarded it as their privilege and duty to mourn—

"Their father, friend, example, guide, removed."

The funeral services were conducted by Rev. Dr. Helmuth and Rev. J. L. Voigt; the latter delivering a discourse from the words of the Psalmist: "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart." In many places the bells were tolled, the churches enshrouded in mourning, and funeral sermons delivered, in grateful remembrance of the departed, and as testimonials of the respect his worth everywhere inspired. The remains of the patriarch quietly rest near the church which was so long the scene of his active labors, and in which he had so often dispensed the symbols of the Saviour's love among the people of God,

and animated them in their Christian pilgrimage by the hopes and consolations of the Gospel. A marble slab marks the spot of the grave, with the following simple inscription :—

Hoc
Monumentum sacrum esto
Memoriæ beati ac venerabilis
Henrie Melchior Muhlenberg,
Sacræ Theologiæ Doctor et
Senioris Ministerii Lutherani
Americani.
Nati Sept. 6, 1711.
Defuncti Oct. 7, 1787.
Qualis et quantus fuerit
Non ignorabunt sine lupide
Futura Sæcula.*

CHAPTER IX.

Dr. Muhlenberg was married, April 30th, 1745, to Anna Maria, a daughter of Colonel Conrad Weiser, celebrated in the colonial annals of Pennsylvania as confidential Indian

* Sacred be this Monument to the Memory of the blessed and venerable Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, Doctor of Sacred Theology and Senior of the American Lutheran Ministerium. Born Sept. 6, 1711. Died Oct. 7, 1787. Who and what he was, future ages will know without a stone.

interpreter and magistrate of the province. She was a woman of great worth, and in every respect calculated to make her husband happy and useful. From this marriage, there were eleven children; four died in infancy; seven, with their widowed mother, survived the patriarch.

John Peter, the eldest, having been educated for the ministry, was ordained by the Synod of Pennsylvania in 1768, and was, for a season, pastor of the Lutheran churches of New Germantown and the vicinity of the State of New Jersey. In 1772, he transferred his residence to Virginia, where many Germans from the Middle States had settled, and, forming themselves into a congregation, requested Dr. Muhlenberg to send them his son as their rector. These Lutherans, in consequence of the peculiar laws that, at this time, existed in Virginia on the subject of Church establishment, had organized as members of the Swedish branch of the Lutheran Church, and in order that their minister might enforce the payment of tithes, it was necessary that he should be invested with Episcopal ordination. Accordingly, Mr. Muhlenberg repaired to England for the purpose, and

in connection with Mr. White, subsequently the venerable Bishop of Pennsylvania, was ordained as priest, by the Lord Bishop of London. On his return, he immediately took charge of the field of labor to which he had been invited, in Shenandoah county. He continued here until 1775, when his fondness for military life, and his ardent patriotism, induced him, at the solicitation of General Washington, with whom he was on the most intimate terms, to accept a commission of colonel in the army. From the commencement of the revolutionary war, he had been very much interested in the contest, and deeply sympathized with those who had enlisted in the service of their country. It, therefore, required very little effort to persuade him to engage personally in the work. It is said, that after he had received his appointment, he preached a valedictory to his congregation, in the course of which he most eloquently depicted the wrongs our country had suffered from Great Britain, and then remarked that "there was a time for all things; a time to preach, and a time to pray; but there was also a time to fight, and that time had now come." Then, having

pronounced the benediction, he deliberately laid aside his gown, which had thus far concealed his military uniform, and proceeding to the door of the church, ordered the drums to beat for recruits. Being greatly beloved by the people, whom he had previously represented in the Virginia House of Delegates, he had no difficulty in filling his regiment. Nearly three hundred men enlisted under his banner, with whom he immediately marched to the protection of Charleston, South Carolina. He was present at the battle of Sullivan's Island, and performed a conspicuous part in all our Southern campaigns. Having been promoted by Congress, in the year 1777, to the rank of Brigadier-General, he held command in the battles of Brandywine and Germantown, and shared the dangers and responsibilities of Monmouth, Stony Point, and Yorktown. He continued in the service until the termination of the war, and was then appointed to the rank of Major-General, before the army was disbanded. Under the old constitution of Pennsylvania, he was elected Vice-President of the State, with Benjamin Franklin as President. He was chosen, for several successive terms, as a representative in Congress, and also served as a

Presidential Elector. In 1801, he was selected by the Legislature of the State as United States Senator. He was likewise honored with several Executive appointments, and, until his death, retained the confidence of the Government, and enjoyed the esteem of the community. He died at his residence, in the vicinity of Philadelphia, in the year 1807.

Frederick Augustus, the second son of the patriarch, was educated at Halle, in Saxony, and was ordained to the work of the ministry before his return to this country. He was stationed, for a time, in Lebanon county, also at Reading and New Hanover. Thence he removed to the city of New York, where he continued to reside, as pastor of the Lutheran Church, until the British entered the city. In consequence of his enthusiastic attachment to the American interest, it was deemed unsafe for him to remain in a position in which he was exposed to imminent danger. It was supposed that if he fell into the power of the enemy, he would be the victim of cruel and vindictive treatment. He, therefore, departed to Pennsylvania, and, for some time, had charge of the congregation in New Hanover. Having been called into political life, he laid aside

the duties of the ministry. In 1779, he was elected a member of the Continental Congress. He was also sent as a delegate to the State Convention, which assembled to ratify the new Federal Constitution, and was selected by his colleagues to preside over their deliberations. He was repeatedly chosen as a representative to Congress under the new Constitution, and, on two different occasions, served as Speaker of the House. He was regarded as a leading and useful statesman. He was universally esteemed, and died, greatly lamented, at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in the year 1812.

Henry Ernest, the youngest son of Dr. Muhlenberg, spent several years in Europe in the prosecution of his studies for the sacred office. On his return to this country in 1770, he was ordained by the Synod of Pennsylvania, and immediately became assistant to his father, and third minister of the United Churches in Philadelphia. He continued to occupy this position until the British obtained possession of the city. As he was threatened with the halter, because of his thorough republicanism and zealous devotion to the cause of the Revolution, he found it necessary to flee from the scene of danger.

Disguised under a blanket, and with a rifle on his shoulder, he had nearly fallen into hostile hands, through the snares of an innkeeper, who had intentionally directed him to take the road by which the British were approaching. Warned, however, in season, by a Whig occupant of the house, he succeeded in making his escape, and reached New Hanover in safety. Relieved, for a time, from professional duties, he engaged with great zest in the study of botany, and acquired that love for this favorite pursuit which afterwards so strongly manifested itself. On the election of his brother to a civil office, he succeeded him as pastor. In the year 1780, he removed to Lancaster, where he labored with great efficiency until his death, in 1815, holding a high rank as a scholar, and distinguished as a minister of the gospel—enjoying the uninterrupted regard of his congregation, and exerting an influence in the community which it is rarely the privilege of the most highly favored to enjoy.

Two of the patriarch's daughters married Lutheran clergymen; the one was the wife of Rev. C. E. Schultze, who immigrated to this country in 1765, and labored so long and so faithfully for the advancement of our Church,

and the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom; the other was married to the Rev. Dr. Kunze, also sent from Halle to this land in 1770, and distinguished for his numerous excellencies; who occupied a prominent position in the Church, and was deservedly eminent for his attainments as a scholar and a theologian.

A third daughter became the wife of Major Francis Swayne; and a fourth was married to Matthew Richards, the father of John W. Richards, D. D., whose premature death, in the vigor of manhood and the meridian of his usefulness, the Church was called to mourn.

CHAPTER X.

In stature, Dr. Muhlenberg was of medium height, thick set, and somewhat stooped. His frame was robust, his complexion florid, his temperament sanguine, with a mixture of the phlegmatic—his eye bright, and expressive of a kind heart—his countenance friendly and engaging, indicative of the warm feelings of his soul—his voice was full, penetrating, and melodious—his elocution clear and effective. His personal

appearance and manner were altogether such as to produce the conviction that he realized the responsibility of the position which he sustained; his whole aspect was becoming the holy office with which he was invested.

From all that we have been able to gather in reference to the subject of our Memoir, we have no difficulty in concluding that he possessed a combination of qualities which peculiarly fitted him for the duties he was called to perform. Gifted by nature with strong mental powers, which had been brought under the influence of the highest cultivation — endowed with a noble heart, which had been sanctified by Divine grace, and disciplined in the school of affliction — and in the possession of a physical constitution which in early life had been inured to labor, with an ardent, active piety, an earnest and enthusiastic devotion to the work, nothing seemed wanting for the successful accomplishment of his mission. He was the man kindly raised up by Providence for the particular emergency required, at this time, in this Western world. The most sanguine expectations of his success in the work were entertained by those who selected him for the object. These expectations were not disap-

pointed. They were more than realized. The sequel amply justified the choice. Under God, he did great things for our Lutheran Zion. His praise is deservedly in all the churches. He has left a name fragrant with the highest honor attainable in this probationary state—that of a good man, sincere in his profession, and upright in his life, widely esteemed, and greatly beloved.

But in attempting an estimate of Dr. Muhlenberg's character, we must go a little into detail, and speak more fully of him in his private and public capacity, particularly as an earnest Christian and a faithful minister of the gospel.

He was a man of clear, vigorous intellect, and of varied and extensive learning. He was distinguished for the versatility of his powers, and the range of his acquirements. His mind, naturally capacious, had been subjected to the most careful culture, the most rigid discipline; and in all his efforts he was regular, systematic, and industrious. His memory was retentive, his perceptions quick, his judgment acute, and his knowledge of character wonderful. As a linguist he occupied a very high rank. He was an accurate and a finished Hebrew and Greek scholar. The German, English, Dutch, French, Bohemian,

and Swedish, it is said, he wrote with fluency. He could also preach in all the different languages then spoken on the continent. With the Latin he was almost as familiar as with his vernacular tongue. At the meeting of Synod, in 1750, we find him delivering a Latin address to the brethren in the ministry; also, at a subsequent Convention, the exercises were introduced with a congratulatory discourse in Latin, by a Swedish Lutheran minister, to which Dr. Muhlenberg replied in the same language.

He had likewise devoted considerable attention to the natural sciences. He was very much interested in the study of chemistry, and had given some time to the subject of medicine, which he found useful to him during his pastoral labors in his visitations to the poor. He was a fine musician, and performed with much skill on the organ, the harp, guitar, and the violin. He, moreover, had a pleasant voice, and it is said sang most delightfully.

A very high estimate was put upon the attainments of Dr. Muhlenberg by his cotemporaries. His society was sought and his influence courted by the learned men of the day. We find him

attending the *commencement* exercises of Princeton College by the special invitation of the Faculty; and from the University of Pennsylvania he received the Doctorate in Divinity, a literary distinction in those days rarely conferred, and only upon those whose claims to the honor were unquestionable.

He was fond of intellectual pursuits, and studied with great zest; yet he never engaged in them for mere self-gratification, or influenced by a love of fame, or a desire to attain some sinister object. All his employments and pleasures were made subordinate to the great purpose to which he had consecrated himself, and were made to subserve the cause of righteousness and the glory of God.

In the pulpit, Dr. Muhlenberg is said to have been exceedingly able. He never failed to arrest the attention, and always seemed to possess great power over his audience. He knew at once the way to the heart, and could concentrate and combine truth so as to bear with great energy on the soul. His own deep religious experience enabled him to describe the various exercises of the mind with wonderful clearness and correct-

ness. He had carefully studied human character, and thoroughly understood the workings of the heart. He could readily adapt his efforts to all classes, and secure the interest of the illiterate as well as the most intelligent in the community. Frequently during the services, the whole congregation was bathed in tears. His sermons were particularly impressive and instructive,—of an analytical character, abounding with scriptural illustrations and facts, selected from the occurrences of every-day life. The truths of God's word were presented with amazing simplicity, meekness, and power. Faithful and fearless, he hesitated not to declare the whole counsel of God, and to rebuke sin, unawed by the presence of man. He never compromised principle for popular applause, or in any respect proved recreant to his high responsibilities, to his solemn obligations. He never uttered sentiments unworthy the sacred desk, or intended to excite amusement. Never did he

"Court a grin, when he should woo a soul."

He kept constantly in view the great object of his vocation,—preaching the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and pleading with sinners to be-

come reconciled to God. He acted as if he felt he was commissioned by God to make known to dying man—

> "The eternal counsels: in his Master's name
> To treat with them of everlasting things,
> Of life, death, bliss, and woe."

He went forth in the spirit of his Master, in reliance upon the Divine strength and the promised aid, to spread the triumphs of the cross, and to cause the waste places to flourish like cedars in the courts of the Lord.

Dr. Muhlenberg was regarded as a model pastor. This was very generally acknowledged. The public ministrations of the Word were faithfully accompanied with suitable efforts in private for the conversion of the soul. The spiritual welfare of his flock occupied his constant thoughts and engaged his unwearied efforts, his watchful care. He never faltered in his labors of love. He sought every opportunity afforded him to lead sinners to Christ. He went about doing good in the name of the Lord. The rich and the poor, the high and the low, the learned and the unlearned, welcomed him as the minister of consolation. He was ever ready to alleviate the

suffering, and to sympathize with the afflicted—to pour oil of gladness into the troubled soul—to reclaim the erring, and to raise the fallen. He had a heart of compassion for his fellow-men. In the hour of darkness and trial, he was with them, soothing their sorrows, and ministering unto them comfort and instruction. At the bed-side of the dying, and mingling his tears with the afflicted, his people always found him such a pastor as they needed. To their relief he was ever willing to devote himself; in their service he was willing to lose even his own life.

> "Needy, poor,
> And dying men, like music heard, his feet
> Approach their beds; and guilty wretches
> Took new hope, and in his prayers wept and smiled,
> And blessed him, as they died forgiven."

Dr. Muhlenberg was deeply interested in the rising generation, and took great delight in instructing them in the principles of the Christian religion. "His love for children," says a cotemporary, "had scarcely its equal; and with untiring zeal did this pious man think of their salvation." He devoted a considerable portion of his time to their improvement, and earnestly labored to promote their highest good.

The Lutheran Church, in its early history, was distinguished for the provision it made for the religious instruction of the young, and pastors laid themselves out specially for the work. Our fathers generally valued catechetical instruction most highly, and improved every occasion afforded them to urge its importance upon the attention of the people. Those who sat under their ministry appreciated the service, and regarded it as a great privilege that they could enjoy this means of grace. It is much to be regretted that the practice so prominent in our Church at the beginning, is, at the present day, in many of our congregations, so sadly neglected, or performed with heartless indifference. Although it has, we know, sometimes failed to accomplish the designed result, yet it is a valuable instrument of good. It has been owned of God, and blessed to the salvation of precious souls. If a deeper concern were manifested in the youth of the Church, and more earnest efforts employed for their recovery from sin, their attachment to their own communion would perhaps be stronger, their interest in religious subjects greater. If they were more thoroughly

instructed in the doctrines and practices of Christianity, they would find it more difficult to wander from the fold,—and, in the morning of life, they would be more likely to consecrate themselves to the service of the Redeemer.

Dr. Muhlenberg is represented as possessing extraordinary skill in giving catechetical instruction. This was acquired in early life in the various positions in which, in the Providence of God, he had been placed. Of the faithful manner in which he conducted the exercises preparatory to admission into the Church, we may give some idea from the following extract, taken almost at random, in connexion with his labors, as found in the Hallische Nachrichten: "In the month of November," says he, "I confirmed and admitted to the Lord's Supper the young people whom I had instructed. There were twenty-six in number, chiefly adults, one of whom was a married man. They had committed to memory the questions on the plan of salvation with considerable accuracy; I earnestly labored to impress them with the proper import of what they had learned; and without ceasing, admonished them to frequent prayer and the

practice of what they had heard. They, therefore, cannot present as an excuse before God that they had not been sufficiently impressed and urged. The greater part had also assured me, in the personal conversations I had with them, that they have frequently been upon their knees in private prayer at home, and that they have experienced in their hearts the influences of the Spirit of God through his Word."

The *Hallische Nachrichten* abounds in interesting illustrations and detailed narratives of Dr. Muhlenberg's anxious solicitude for souls, and the various means he employed for the spiritual improvement of his congregations. The following account of the exercises preceding the administration of the Lord's Supper in one of his churches, will be read with interest. It is found in a communication forwarded to Halle, in the year 1746: "The week before, all who would partake of the sacrament, must meet the Pastor at the parsonage or the school-house, when the opportunity is embraced to ascertain the spiritual condition of each individual, and to afford him the necessary warning, or comfort and encouragement. The day before the celebration

of the Eucharist, all such meet in the church; an appropriate discourse on repentance is preached and applied, without mentioning names, to each one's condition. Then all surround the altar in a semi-circle, and if there be any who have been a public offence, or an open stumbling-block, they must each come forward. The Pastor again reminds them publicly of their sins, admonishes them to true repentance, and demands of them contrition, faith, and reformation of life. When they have promised this, the Pastor asks all present whether they will forgive the offence caused by those thus confessing their sins, and will help to pray for them to God through Christ. Then all are admonished not to think themselves better than these sinners — for every one has reason to watch over his own heart, and that the grace of God is alone sufficient to restrain them from sin, and to reform their life. After this, the usual confession is made kneeling, pardon being promised to the truly penitent, and condemnation declared from God's word to all impenitent persons, hypocrites, as well as open sinners, all are yet once asked whether they cherish any ill-will one towards

another; and if any misunderstanding between members exist, such remain after the service, forgive one another, and become reconciled."

We give one or two more passages from the *Hallische Nachrichten*, for the purpose of exhibiting his pastoral character, the profound and earnest interest he took in the spiritual welfare of all with whom he came in contact. There seemed to be "a word fitly spoken" for every one he met. On one occasion he writes, "I visited a female of the Reformed Church, who seems to be truly pious,—and a colored woman, a slave, entered the room, evidently a friend of true religion, and possessing an experimental acquaintance with it. I conversed with her in the English language, and endeavored to encourage her in the work in which she was engaged." On another occasion, he says: "I this day, after an examination, baptized three negroes." Again he remarks, during his sojourn in New York, "This morning I preached in Low Dutch, on the '*Unjust Steward*;' and in the afternoon, in German, from the text, '*I am crucified to the world.*' A widow of the congregation had a mulatto slave, who was in the habit of attending our

English and Low Dutch meetings, and by her consistent walk had put many nominal Christians to the blush. She brought me my dinner from her mistress. I offered her a piece of money, as an evidence of my gratitude, but she absolutely refused to take it, and began to weep bitterly, because she heard I was about to leave them. She said she had experienced in her heart the power of the word preached, and had never before obtained so much consolation for her soul; and now I was about to leave them. I must confess my heart was ready to break. I urged her to cling closely to the Lord Jesus, who shed his blood for her. On the same day, after the afternoon service, three inquiring sinners visited me at my house, and desired a word of instruction. At night, I preached in the English language, on the condition of the Church at Laodicea."

He was indefatigable in his labors, instant in season and out of season, abundant in promoting the Divine honor and the spiritual good of his fellow-men of all classes and conditions in society.

> "With all of patience and affection taught,
> Rebuked, persuaded, solaced, counselled, warned,
> In fervent style and manner."

The constraining love of Christ continually urged him forward in the discharge of his numerous and responsible duties. In communion with his God in secret, he sought and obtained those qualifications for the active labors of his calling, which he possessed in so eminent a degree, and which were developed in all his intercourse. Says Dr. Helmuth, "The Lord was truly with him, upon whom alone he depended for success. The word, spoken by inspiration, was in his case verified — 'Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see where heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.'" God did truly bless his efforts. Precious fruit was the result. There were evidences of usefulness and of the Divine blessing upon his labors, seldom surpassed in this or in any other land. The amount of his influence cannot be measured. Eternity alone can reveal the result.

The personal character of Dr. Muhlenberg

was such as to gain the hearts of all who knew him. He possessed those excellencies of character, which always win the affections and secure warm and devoted friends. His manners were such as to inspire confidence, and to prepare the way for the most unrestrained communication. The timid and diffident felt no embarrassment in his presence. All approached him with the feelings which children manifest in their approaches to a kind and tender parent. He had the faculty of attaching to himself all who came within the circle of his influence. He exercised a charm, which few could resist. He was full of kindness, ever ready to do good, and always consulting the happiness of others. His benevolence was a habitual exercise. Acts of goodness were performed whenever occasions presented. He knew

> —— "that good, the more
> Communicated, the more abundant grows."

No one ever came to him needing assistance, whom he was not willing to take to his home, and assist to the utmost of his ability. To all who required his advice or counsel, he most

cheerfully devoted his time and his services. In conversation he was pleasing and instructive, frequently facetious and playful, yet always dignified, easy, and affable. He never let himself down by invading the character of others, nor was he unmindful of the position he occupied as an ambassador of the Most High. No word ever fell from his lips which was intended to wound the feelings or needlessly to pain the heart. He had learned effectually in the school of Christ, that the courtesies of life were not to be disregarded, that genuine politeness is an essential ingredient of the Christian character. He was also distinguished for his unaffected simplicity, so prominent in the sincere German, who from infancy has been reared by pious parents, and whose whole soul is imbued with Christian principle. He was mild and gentle, patient and forgiving; yet he possessed great energy and decision — a firmness of character and integrity of purpose which nothing could intimidate or shake. So much confidence, we have seen, was reposed in his justice, that our congregations throughout the country, when involved in trouble or difficulty, appealed to his judgment, and cor-

dially submitted to his decision, whether it was favorable or unfavorable to their interests. His influence was boundless; his opinions in all questions carried with them great weight. The affection and love which all cherished for him were unlimited; the regard and veneration, which all entertained for his character, most profound. In all the relations of life he was honored, esteemed, and admired.

"Oh, who can speak his praise! Great, humble man!"

His life was a beautiful illustration of the reverence all men feel for exalted piety and active benevolence.

The secret of Dr. Muhlenberg's wonderful influence and success, was his eminent, warm-hearted piety. The spirit of Christ was in him. It beamed from his eyes — it breathed from his lips. He was a sincere, devoted Christian — beautifully exemplifying in his life the truth of his principles and the power of the Gospel. His actions always corresponded with the lessons he inculcated from the pulpit — the duties he enforced in his pastoral visitations. His claims to discipleship none questioned. His

qualifications for the joys of the eternal world all admitted.

Dr. Muhlenberg's piety was pure and elevated. It burned with a clear and steady flame. It was so free from those human infirmities which often adhere even to a good man. It pervaded his whole character, and was seen in a uniform course of holy living, and a persevering system of labor in the cause of Christ. Religion entered into all his plans of life, and into all his arrangements. It was the topic of his conversation — the object of all his efforts. He was a man of prayer — of peculiar and earnest prayer. He prayed, not as a matter of form, or merely from a sense of duty, but because he loved to pray, and because he had faith in God, the hearer and answerer of prayer. He was a man of strong faith, and acted as if he believed the promises of God. He was never disturbed by the clouds and storms which gathered around him. He knew his Father was at the helm. He trusted when he could not see — he adored when he could not complain! It is said that he often spent whole nights pleading at the throne of grace with earnestness and with tears, yet with

unwavering faith in God, especially when in doubt or perplexity, or when difficulties or strife existed in any of the churches, and pressed heavily upon his mind. He was a man of great humility. All that he had done he regarded as worthless. He looked to the Redeemer as the only ground of acceptance with God. Clothed with his righteousness, justified by faith in the blood of the atonement, he had peace with God. He knew in whom he believed, — and he felt assured that when the "earthly house of this tabernacle," which he inhabited, was dissolved, he had "a building of God, — a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." His piety was of that calm, rational, cheerful type, which seemed to spring from the heart, and which in every difficulty was wont to look directly to God for help. It inspired him with fortitude in trial and intrepidity in danger. It was "as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil."

In his theological views, Dr. Muhlenberg was most evangelical. This might naturally be inferred from what has already been said. He cordially embraced all those distinguishing truths

which are so vital to the Christian system, and so precious to every believer. The doctrine of man's depravity, justification by faith in Jesus Christ, salvation by grace, the necessity of the influence of the Holy Spirit in the work of regeneration, and the constant need of Divine aid in the faithful discharge of our Christian duties, were topics upon which he loved to dwell, and which exerted an influence upon all his movements. He venerated the standards of his Church, and defended them from misrepresentations; but he did not receive them as an absolute rule of faith. All the Lutheran churches of his day were built on the Augsburg Confession, yet he did not desire this symbol to supersede the word of God. The Bible he regarded as the only infallible rule of faith and practice. He was not averse to confessions; but he proposed to rest upon human declarations only so far as they derive their light from the sacred Scriptures. He was never disposed to contend for those points of doctrine which are not considered fundamental, for their minor and verbal differences of belief which have so frequently been the occasion of controversy and strife

among the brethren. Claiming respect for his own views, he was disposed to respect the views of others, and was willing to allow liberty of thought. He was no bigot. He had no sympathy with sectarian prescription so prevalent in the land, which is disposed to exclude from Christian fellowship everything which does not originate with itself, or which is not carried on under its own auspices. He condemned the spirit of intolerance, which is the reproach of any church in which it is found. His views were liberal and comprehensive. He lived on the most intimate terms with his cotemporaries, and highly esteemed the servants of Christ connected with other Christian denominations. He was willing to unite with them in any effort for doing good, and ready to co-operate most heartily with all who loved the Lord. His intercourse with brethren of different creeds was pleasant and profitable. In referring to a visit made him by the Rev. Mr. Tennent, of the Presbyterian Church, he remarks: "It was to me a season of spiritual refreshing." This feeling was reciprocated by those with whom he was brought in contact. Rev. Mr. Davies, in his Journal, uses

the following language: "Waited on three Lutheran ministers (one of them was undoubtedly the subject of our sketch), and was not a little pleased with their candor and simplicity. How pleasing it is to see the religion of Jesus appear undisguised in foreigners! I am so charmed with it, that I forget all national and religious differences, — and my very heart is intimately united with them." He attended, by special invitation, a convention of the Episcopal Church, and was received with marked kindness. In 1763, we find Rev. Messrs. Durkee, Peters, and Ingliss, of the Episcopal Church, and Rev. Messrs. Findlay and Tennent, of the Presbyterian Church, and Rev. Mr. Whitfield, present at a Synodical meeting of our Church, and by a vote of Synod, Mr. Whitfield preached a sermon. Mr. W. likewise attended an examination of the children of the congregation on the truths of Christianity, and at the close of the exercises, delivered an address.

Dr. Muhlenberg loved all true Christians, because he recognised in them the likeness of his Master; because he saw them possessing substantially the same great objects which animated

his own soul, which enlisted his own sympathies and efforts. He had no fondness for theological warfare. He protested against a useless separation between brethren. He thought that the bonds of confidence, that ought to bind them together, should not be sundered; that efforts against the common foe should be united and strengthened. Whilst sinners were perishing, and spiritual death prevailed, they should consult for the improvement of the Church, and adopt measures to build up the waste places and increase the efficiency of Zion, that Christ's kingdom might come, and be extended to the ends of the earth.

Such was the character of this venerated servant of Christ, whose memory we love to revere, whose virtues the Church desires to transmit to posterity. His name is written in heaven,—his worth is cherished on the earth! Let us praise God, that the pioneer of the American Lutheran Church was so devoted a Christian, so faithful a laborer in the vineyard of the Lord. Let us be grateful to the Great Head of the Church for the services he rendered — for the example he has left us. The memory of such a man cannot die.

The influence of his character death cannot destroy. It survives the dissolution of the body, and continues unfading and immortal. What he did for God will live when the memorial of the wicked has passed away. "The memory of the just shall live." "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance." "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord,—they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

We should continue to hold in affectionate remembrance the excellencies of the good man, and strive to cultivate his pure, peaceable, elevated, and active piety. We should imitate his fidelity — his devotion to the cause of the Redeemer. We should earnestly and fervently pray that his mantle may descend upon us—that, like him, we may prove a blessing to the community, "a burning and a shining light" in the Church, and an instrument of much good to the world;—that like him, we may die and our sun set without a cloud, leaving behind it an undying radiance; that survivors may discover, in their recollections of us, springs of comfort, testimonies to the power of religion, encouragement to virtue and piety, and pledges of immortality.

The piety of this patriarch may be ours! We possess the same means for its culture which he did — the same precious gospel which is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," — the same Holy Spirit — the same Saviour—the same mercy-seat. If we fail, it is because we are unfaithful to our privileges, unfaithful to ourselves, and unfaithful to our God; because we do not "run with patience the race that is set before us;" because we do not "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

The same blissful departure from this world may also be ours! If we live the life of the righteous, we may die his death — our last end will be like his! Only those, however, who look to Jesus as the author and finisher of their faith, and rely upon his merits, can walk unfalteringly "through the valley of the shadow of death," fearing no evil. He will be with them; — his rod and staff will comfort them.

The same eternal glory likewise may be ours! The Saviour has promised it to every true believer: "In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you." If our

"life is hid with Christ in God, when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory." When life's journey is over, and the world recedes from our vision, we shall behold his glory and abide with him forever. "They that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars, forever and ever."

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C. PHILIP KRAUTH.

JAN 29 1954